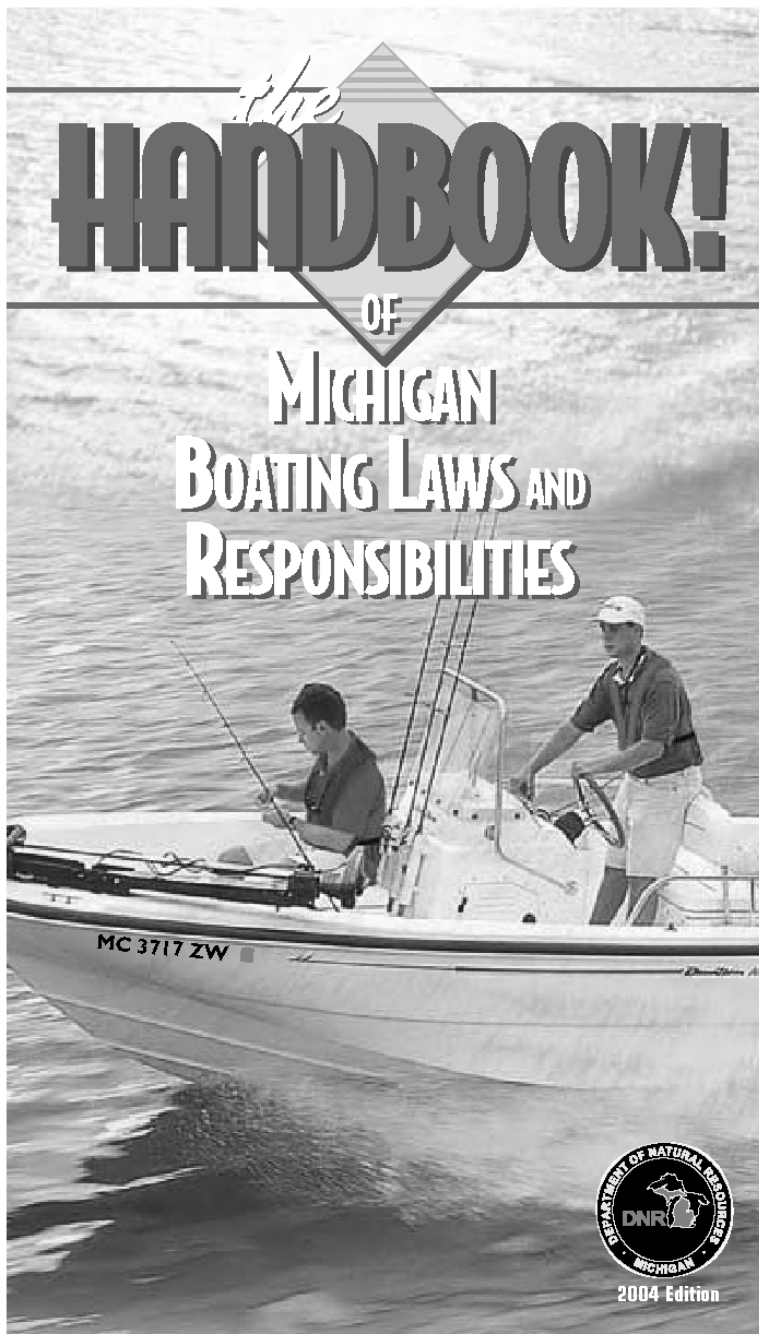


Part E—The Handbook of Michigan Boating Laws and Responsibilities



WELCOME

to the Best Boating Resources in the U.S. and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources



The State of Michigan is surrounded by four of the five Great Lakes—the world's largest fresh-water lakes. These Great Lakes constitute 90% of the U.S.'s fresh surface water. Michigan has approximately 3,288 miles of Great Lakes coastline, more than 10,000 inland lakes and ponds and is interwoven by a 35,000-mile web of freshwater rivers, streams, and wetlands. Accordingly, Michigan leads the nation for registered boats.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources promotes the safe use and enjoyment of the bountiful waters of Michigan. Through education, regulation and enforcement, the Department hopes to insure that boating continues to grow in safety and popularity.


Whether your interest is in fishing, sailing, hunting, canoeing, camping or water skiing—boating education is essential. We hope that you will practice what you learn from this handbook and pass your knowledge on to others.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

OUR MISSION

The Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural resources for current and future generations.





MICHIGAN BOATING LAWS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Hearing Impaired TTY (711) Michigan Relay Center

For information or assistance on this publication, contact the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Box 30031, Lansing, MI 48909-7531. This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.

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It's the **LAW!**

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Stay abreast of new boating laws...

- ◆ Call the Michigan Department of Natural Resources:
(517) 373-1230
- ◆ Visit the Department of Natural Resources website at
www.michigan.gov/dnr



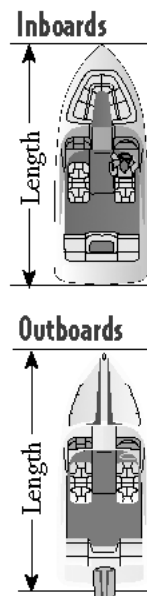
Before Going Out on Your Vessel



Before going out on the water, take steps to make the outing safe and enjoyable.

Vessel Length Classes

- ◆ A vessel's length class dictates the equipment necessary to comply with federal and state laws.
- ◆ Vessels are divided into four length classes:
 - Less than 16 feet
 - 16 feet to less than 26 feet
 - 26 feet to less than 40 feet
 - 40 feet to 65 feet.
- ◆ Length is measured from the tip of the bow in a straight line to the stern. This does not include outboard motors, brackets, rudders, bow attachments, or swim platforms and ladders not a molded part of the hull.



Vessel Capacity

- ◆ Always check the capacity plate usually near the operator's position or on the vessel's transom. This plate indicates the maximum weight capacity or maximum number of people that the vessel can safely carry.
- ◆ Personal watercraft (PWCs) do not have a capacity plate. Always follow the recommended capacity in the owner's manual and on the manufacturer's warning decal.

Fueling a Vessel

Here are some safe fueling procedures to follow:

- ◆ Check the entire fuel system for leaks. Tighten connections frequently. Engine vibration can loosen them.

4 *Boating Basics*

- ◆ Turn off all engines and electrical equipment; shut off all fuel valves; and close all windows, doors and openings.
- ◆ Try to fuel in daylight. If light is required, use a flashlight or a light that is spark-proof.
- ◆ Never smoke or strike a match while fueling or when near a fueling dock.
- ◆ When filling a tank or gas can, follow these guidelines:
 - Remove portable tanks from the vessel.
 - Touch the fuel pipe or tank with the spout to prevent buildup of static electricity.
 - Never fill a tank to the brim. Leave room for gas to expand. After fueling, put the fill cap on tightly to prevent vapors from escaping.
 - Immediately wipe up any spilled gas. Air out the rag after using it. Never throw it in the vessel or the water.
 - Store gas onboard in a safety-approved storage tank, away from the engine in an area of good ventilation.

The most important safe fueling practice...

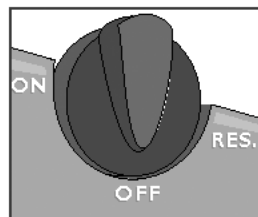
If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least 4 minutes after fueling, prior to starting your engine to remove gas vapors.

- ◆ Some additional safety procedures for PWCs are:
 - Avoid spills when fueling in or near the water.
 - After fueling, open the door of the engine compartment and sniff to check for any evidence of gas fumes. Do this before starting the engine. If you do smell gas fumes, determine the source, and make repairs immediately.
 - Do not tip the PWC to “fill all the way up.” The tank provides for fuel expansion; if tank is over-filled, gasoline may expand and spill into the water.

Fuel Selector Switch on a PWC

This switch can help you avoid becoming stranded without fuel.

- ◆ Use the “Off” position when a PWC’s engine is turned off.
- ◆ Use the “On” position while you are underway.
- ◆ Use the “Reserve” position if you run out of fuel while underway. This will allow you to return to shore. Don’t forget to switch back to “On” after refueling.



Preventing Theft

To defend against theft of your vessel, motor and equipment:

- ◆ Store your vessel so that it is not easily accessed.
 - Store your vessel and trailer in a locked garage/storage.
 - Park another vehicle in front of the trailer, or chain or lock the trailer to a fixed object in a well lighted area.
 - Secure the vessel and trailer to a secure object with a good quality chain and lock. If moored, secure the vessel to the dock with a steel cable and lock.
 - Remove trailer wheel if parked for an extended time.
 - Purchase a good quality trailer hitch lock and use it.
- ◆ Chain and lock the motor and fuel tanks to the vessel.
- ◆ Mark or engrave all equipment with an identifier such as your driver’s license number including state abbreviation.
- ◆ Photograph or videotape the interior and exterior of your vessel showing all installed equipment and additional gear and equipment.
- ◆ Title and register your vessel. Make a complete inventory of your equipment, vessel, and trailer.
- ◆ Remove expensive electronics or other valuables if the vessel is left unattended.
- ◆ Cover your vessel and always remove the keys.

Filing a Float Plan

Before going out on a vessel it is always a good idea to leave a float plan with a local marina, relative, or friend. A float plan should:

- ◆ Describe the vessel, its number, size, make, capacity, horsepower, and type of engine.
- ◆ List where you are going, the route, and your expected return time.
- ◆ Give the number of passengers, their names and addresses, and a contact in case of an emergency.

Pre-Departure Checklist

You can assure a good time while operating your vessel by performing this pre-departure check.

- ✓ Leave your float plan with a responsible person.
- ✓ Make sure that the steering and throttle controls operate properly and all lights are working properly.
- ✓ Check for any fuel leaks from the tank, fuel lines, and carburetor.
- ✓ Check the engine compartment for oil leaks.
- ✓ Check hose connections for leaks or cracks and make sure hose clamps are tight.
- ✓ Drain all water from the engine compartment and be sure the bilge plug is replaced and secure.
- ✓ Check to be sure the fire extinguisher is fully charged.
- ✓ Make sure that the stop button works on a PWC.
- ✓ Make sure the ignition safety switch and wrist lanyard are in working order.
- ✓ Make sure you have the required number of personal flotation devices (life jackets) and that they are in good condition.

On the Water with Your Vessel



Safe navigation on Michigan waterways is the responsibility of everyone. All operators are equally responsible for taking action to avoid collisions.

Encountering Other Vessels

Even though no vessel has the “right of way” over another vessel, there are some rules that every operator should follow when encountering other vessels. It is the responsibility of both operators to take action to avoid a collision. The next page shows what to do when you encounter another vessel.

To prevent collisions, every operator should follow the three basic rules of navigation:

- ◆ Practice good seamanship.
- ◆ Keep a sharp lookout.
- ◆ Maintain a safe speed.

Encountering Vessels With Limited Maneuverability

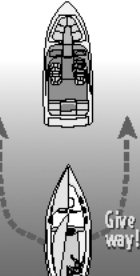
- ◆ If operating a power-driven vessel, you must give way to:
 - Any vessel not under command, such as an anchored or a disabled vessel
 - Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver, such as a vessel towing or laying cable, or a vessel constrained by its draft such as a large ship in a channel
 - A vessel engaged in commercial fishing
 - A sailboat under sail unless it is overtaking.
- ◆ If operating a vessel under sail, you must give way to:
 - Any vessel not under command
 - Any vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver
 - A vessel engaged in commercial fishing.

Navigation Rules

There are two terms that help explain these rules:

Stand-on boat The vessel which should maintain its course and speed

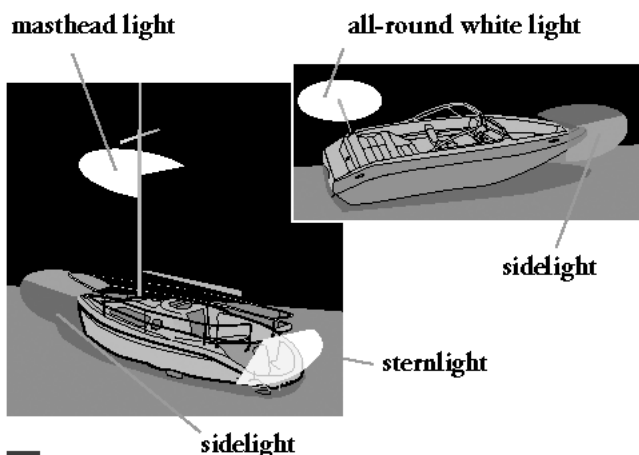
Give-way boat The vessel which must take early and substantial action to avoid collision by stopping, slowing down or changing course

	<p>Meeting Head-On Power vs. Power: Neither vessel is the stand-on boat. Both vessels should keep to the starboard (right). Power vs. Sail: The powerboat is the give-way boat. The sailboat is the stand-on boat.</p>	
<p>Power vs. Power</p> 	<p>Crossing Situations Power vs. Power: The vessel on the port (left) is the give-way boat. The vessel on the starboard (right) is the stand-on boat. Power vs. Sail: The powerboat is the give-way boat. The sailboat is the stand-on boat.</p>	<p>Power vs. Sail</p> 
<p>Power vs. Power</p> 	<p>Overtaking Power vs. Power: The vessel that is overtaking another vessel is the give-way boat. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on boat. Power vs. Sail: The vessel that is overtaking another vessel is the give-way boat. The vessel being overtaken is the stand-on boat.</p>	<p>Power vs. Sail</p> 

Night Time Navigation

You should always be on the lookout for the lights of other vessels when boating at night. Several types of lights serve as navigational aids at night. They are:

- ◆ **Sidelights** These red and green lights are called sidelights (or combination lights) because they are visible to another vessel approaching from the side or head-on. The red light indicates a vessel's port (left) side; the green indicates a vessel's starboard (right) side.
- ◆ **Sternlight** A white light seen from behind the vessel.
- ◆ **Masthead Light** A white light, which shines forward, located on the mast of a sailboat and required on all powerboats. A masthead light must be used by all vessels when under engine power. The absence of this light identifies a sailboat under sail.
- ◆ **All-Round White Light** On powerboats less than 39.4 feet in length, this light may be used to combine a masthead and sternlight into a single white light able to be seen by other vessels from any direction. When sidelights are extinguished, this light serves as an anchor light.



10 *Boating Basics*



Encountering Vessels at Night

When you see a white and a green light you are the stand-on boat. However, remain alert in case the other vessel operator does not see you or does not know the navigational rules.



When you see only a white light, you are overtaking another vessel. It is the stand-on boat whether it is underway or anchored. You may go around it on either side.



When you see a red and a white light you must give way to the other vessel! Slow down and allow the vessel to pass or pass to the right behind the vessel.

Encountering a Sailboat at Night

When you see **only a green or only a red light** you are approaching a sailboat under sail and you must give way. The sailboat under sail is always the stand-on boat!






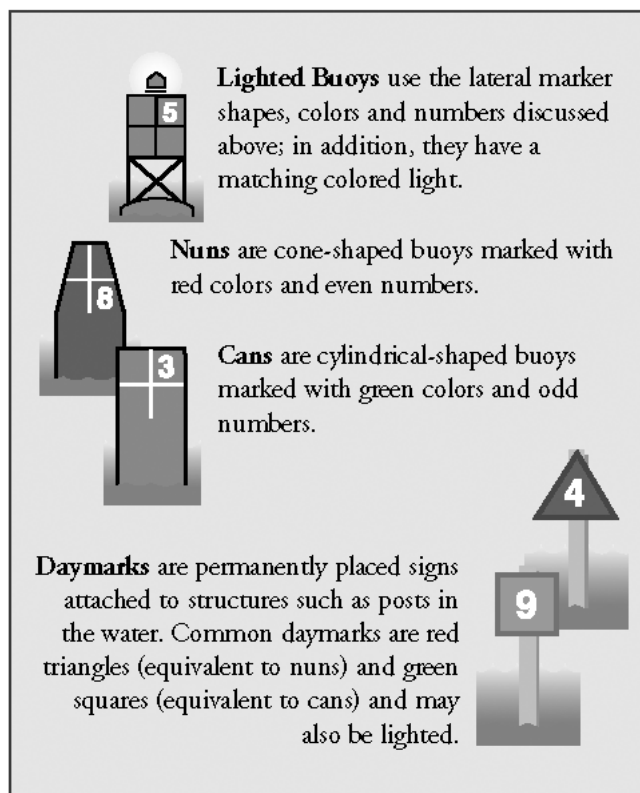
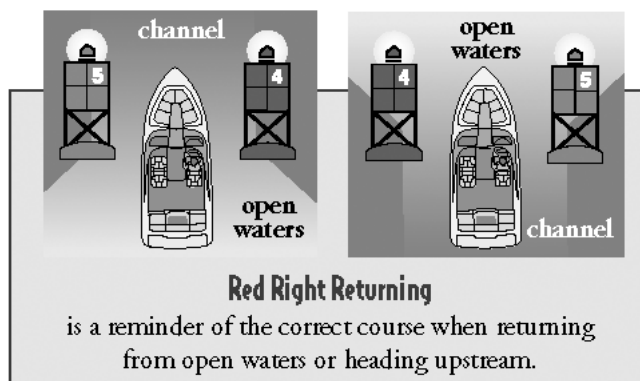
U.S. Aids to Navigation System (ATON)

Buoys and markers are the “traffic signals” that guide vessel operators safely along some waterways. They also identify dangerous or controlled areas and give directions and information. As a recreational vessel operator you will need to know the lateral navigation markers and non-lateral markers of the U.S. Aids to Navigation System.

Lateral Markers

These navigation aids are used to mark the edges of safe water areas; for example, to direct travel within a channel. They use a combination of colors and numbers which may be applied to buoys or permanently placed markers.

<p>Red colors, red lights, and even numbers indicate the right side of the channel as a boater enters from the open sea or heads upstream.</p>	
<p> Green colors, green lights and odd numbers indicate the left side of the channel as a boater proceeds from the open sea or heads upstream.</p>	
<p>Red and green colors and/or lights indicate the preferred (primary) channel. If green is on top, the preferred channel is to the right; if red is on top, the preferred channel is to the left.</p>	



Non-Lateral Markers

Non-lateral markers are navigational aids that give information about subjects other than the edges of safe water areas. The most common are regulatory markers shown on the next page that are white and use orange markings and black lettering. These markers are found on lakes and rivers.



Information

These squares indicate where to find food, supplies, repairs, etc., and give directions and other information.



Controlled

Circles indicate a controlled area such as speed limit, no fishing or anchoring, ski only or no skiing, or slow-no wake.



Exclusion

Crossed diamonds indicate areas off-limits to all vessels, such as swimming areas, dams, and spillways.

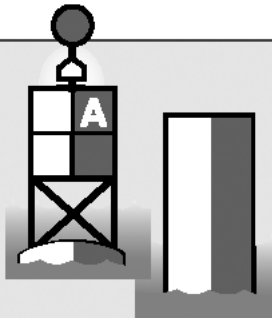


Danger

Diamonds warn of dangers such as rocks, shoals, construction, dams, or stumps. Always proceed with caution.

Other Non-Lateral Markers

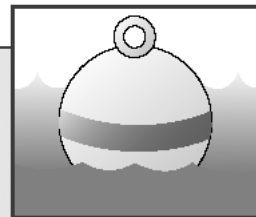
Safe Water Marks are white with red vertical stripes and mark mid-channels or fairways. They may be passed on either side.



Inland Waters Obstruction Marks are white with black vertical stripes and indicate an obstruction to navigation. You should not pass between these buoys and the shore.

Mooring Buoy

Another kind of buoy you may encounter is the mooring buoy. These are white with a blue horizontal band. They are usually placed in marinas and other areas where vessels are allowed to



Weather Emergencies

Weather can change very rapidly and create unexpected situations for vessel operators. Even meteorologists have trouble predicting rapid weather changes. You should always monitor weather developments. One way is to tune into the frequencies listed below on a VHF radio.

What to Do If Caught in Foul Weather

- ◆ Put on personal flotation devices (life jackets) and make sure they are properly secured.
- ◆ If there is fog, sound your fog horn. See page 34.
- ◆ Head for the nearest shore that is safe to approach.
- ◆ Head the bow into the waves at a 45 degree angle.
PWCs should head into the waves at a 90 degree angle.
- ◆ Reduce speed.
- ◆ Seat passengers on the bottom of the vessel, as close to the centerline as possible.









VHF Frequencies Broadcasting NOAA Weather Reports

162.400 MHz	162.500 MHz
162.425 MHz	162.525 MHz
162.450 MHz	162.550 MHz
162.475 MHz	

Recreational boaters are given access to these VHF channels:

- 6** Intership safety communications only
- 9** Communications between vessels (commercial and recreational), and ship to coast
- 13** Strictly for navigational purposes by vessels at bridges, locks, and harbors
- 16** Distress and safety calls to Coast Guard and others, and to initiate calls to other vessels
- 22** U. S. Coast Guard broadcasts of severe weather warnings and other safety warnings
- 24-28** Public telephone calls (to marine operator)
- 68, 69, 71** Recreational vessel radio channel and ship to coast

- ◆ Minimize the danger of having your vessel struck by lightning by seeking shelter in advance of a storm. If caught on open water during a thunderstorm, stay low in the middle of the vessel.
- ◆ Secure loose items. Have emergency gear ready.
- ◆ Keep the bilge free of water.
- ◆ If the engine stops, drop anchor from the bow. If you have no anchor use a “sea anchor,” which is anything (a bucket on a line, a tackle box) that will create drag, and hold the bow into the wind.

Daytime Flags	Night Time Lights	Weather Warning Display Signals
		Small Craft Advisory Winds in the range of 21 to 33 knots (24 to 38 mph) which are conditions considered dangerous to small vessels.
		Gale Warning Winds in the range of 34 to 47 knots (39-54 mph).
		Storm Warning Winds 48 knots (55 mph) and above. If the winds are associated with a tropical cyclone, this warning forecasts winds of 48-63 knots.
		Hurricane Warning Winds of 64 knots (74 mph) and above, displayed in connection with a hurricane.

Boating Basics 17

On the Water Especially for PWCs

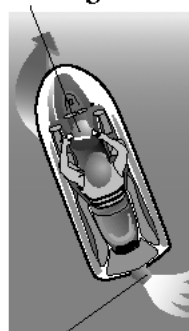


Although a PWC is considered an inboard vessel and comes under the same rules and requirements of any other vessel, there are specific considerations for the PWC operator.

Steering and Stopping a PWC

- ◆ Most PWCs have a steering nozzle at the back of the unit. It is controlled by a handle bar or steering wheel that directs the stream of water from right to left. When the steering control is turned right, the steering nozzle is turned right. The force of the water stream leaving the nozzle then pushes the back of the vessel to the left, which causes the PWC to turn right.

steering control



steerable nozzle

Remember—no power means no steering control...

You must always have power in order to maintain control. If you allow the engine to return to idle or shut off during operation, you lose all steering control. The PWC will continue in the direction it was headed before the engine was shut off, no matter which way the steering control is turned.

- ◆ Always allow plenty of room for stopping. Just because you release the throttle or shut off the engine does not mean you will stop immediately.

Ignition Safety Switches

- ◆ All PWCs come equipped with an emergency ignition safety switch which is designed to shut the engine down if the operator is thrown from the proper operating position.
- ◆ The ignition safety switch works by attaching a lanyard between the operator and the switch. If the lanyard is removed from the switch, then the engine will shut off.
- ◆ If your PWC does not come equipped with an ignition safety switch, you should have one installed.
- ◆ It is illegal to ride your PWC without attaching the lanyard properly between the switch and yourself.



Reboarding a Capsized PWC

After a fall a PWC could be completely overturned. When this occurs you should follow these procedures:

- ◆ Most manufacturers have placed a decal at the rear of the craft that indicates the direction to roll your PWC to an upright position. If no decal exists, check your owner's manual or ask the dealer.
- ◆ With this information you should be able to roll the PWC over and reboard from the rear of the craft. If you roll it over the wrong way you could cause serious damage to your PWC.
- ◆ Practice reboarding with someone else around.
- ◆ Avoid riding your PWC when you are very tired, as this can make reboarding more difficult.
- ◆ Avoid riding where there are strong currents or winds, as this could hamper your reboarding efforts.

Courtesy When Encountering Other Vessels

- ◆ Jumping the wake of a passing vessel, or riding too close to another vessel, creates special risks and is restricted or even prohibited. Visibility around the vessel making the wake may be blocked, both for the PWC operator and for oncoming traffic.
- ◆ Vary your operating area and avoid repetitious operation during your ride.
- ◆ Avoid congregating with other PWC operators near shore as this can increase annoying noise levels.
- ◆ Avoid making excessive noise near residential and camping areas, particularly early in the morning. Excessive use in one area can be an irritant to people who are there to enjoy a quiet and relaxing time.
- ◆ Avoid maneuvers that cause the engine exhaust to lift out of the water; this causes increased noise levels.
- ◆ Do not modify your engine exhaust system if the result is more noise. Improperly modified exhausts will not make your PWC faster and may raise the noise to an illegal level.

Environmental Considerations

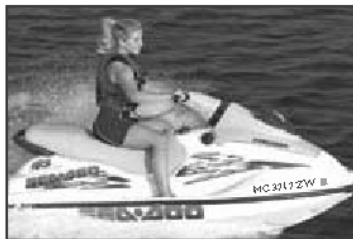
When operating your PWC always be considerate of the effect you may have on the environment.

- ◆ Do not operate a PWC in shallow water (less than 24 inches deep). Bottom sediments or aquatic vegetation can be sucked into the water pump and damage your PWC and the environment.
- ◆ Avoid creating a wake which can cause erosion when operating near shore or in narrow streams or rivers.
- ◆ Do not dock or beach your PWC in reeds and grasses. This could damage fragile environments.

- ◆ Take extra care when fueling your PWC in or near the water. Oil and gasoline spills are very detrimental to the aquatic environment. Fuel on land if possible.
- ◆ Never use your PWC to chase wildlife such as birds feeding near shore, water fowl, or other animals.

Other PWC Considerations

- ◆ You and anyone onboard must wear a personal flotation device (life jacket).
- ◆ Frequently inspect your PWC's electrical systems (e.g., starter and engine gauge connections) to ensure there is no potential for electrical spark. Gas fumes can collect in the engine compartment and an explosion could occur. After fueling, sniff the engine compartment for any evidence of gas fumes.
- ◆ Every operator and passenger should know how to swim.
- ◆ Keep hands, feet, and hair away from the pump intake. When cleaning debris away from the pump intake, always shut the engine off.
- ◆ Know your limits and ride according to your abilities.
- ◆ Never exceed the load limit of your PWC.
- ◆ See page 42 for other requirements specific to PWCs.



Before Going Out on Your Vessel



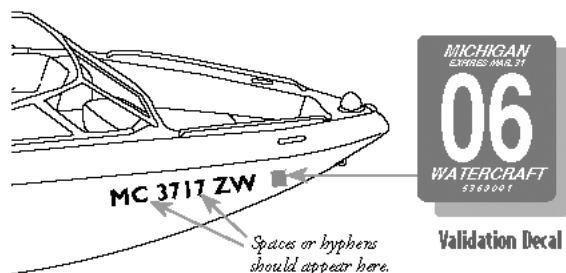
All operators are required to obey laws that regulate your vessel's registration, titling and operation.

Registering Your Vessel

- ◆ You must have a Michigan Certificate of Number (registration) and a validation decal to legally operate your vessel on public waters in Michigan. The only exceptions are:
 - Privately owned non-motorized canoe, kayak, or rowboat of length 16 feet or less
 - Vessels with valid registration in another state or country temporarily on the waters of Michigan.
- ◆ The Certificate of Number and validation decals are obtained by submitting the proper application and fee to any Secretary of State branch office.
- ◆ This Certificate of Number (registration card) must be onboard and available for inspection by an enforcement officer whenever the vessel is being operated.
- ◆ The registration number and validation decal must be displayed as follows:
 - Number must be painted, applied as a decal or otherwise affixed to both sides of the bow, as high above the waterline as practical.
 - Number shall read from left to right on both sides of the bow.
 - Number must be in at least 3-inch-high block letters.
 - Number's color must contrast with its background.

MICHIGAN REGISTRATION WATERCRAFT				Issued by the Secretary of State	
03/31/03	MC 3717 ZW				
98	Four Winns	20	04	\$42.00	
FWN67689B698 Wayne				XX	
Fiberglass 3 Open		Inboard			
Pleasure		Gas			
John Doe 1430 Southview Lane Livonia, MI 48152					
<small>Registration must be presented at all times when the vessel is in use.</small>					

It's the Law!



- Letters and numbers must be separated by a space or hyphen. Example: “MC 3717 ZW” or “MC-3717-ZW.”
- No other numbers can be displayed on either side of the bow.
- Decal must be affixed on both sides of the vessel three inches following the last character of the registration number.

Where to Title and Register

The Certificate of Number and validation decals are obtained by submitting the proper application and fee to any Secretary of State branch office. You can find your closest branch office:

- By calling (517) 322-1460
- On the Internet at
www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127--34560--,00.html

Where to Renew Your Certificate of Number

A Certificate of Number is valid for three years and may be renewed:

- Over the Internet at
www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1640_14837-34150--,00.html
- At any Secretary of State branch office

It's the Law! 

Other Facts About Titling and Registration

- ◆ All vessels which are of length 20 feet or greater or have a permanently affixed engine must also be titled.
- ◆ As the owner of a vessel, you must notify the Secretary of State and surrender your Certificate of Number within 15 days if:
 - Your vessel is abandoned or destroyed
 - Your vessel is sold or ownership is otherwise transferred
 - You change address.
- ◆ If you lose or destroy your Certificate of Number or decal you must apply to the Secretary of State for a duplicate and submit a processing fee.
- ◆ Vessels registered in another state may operate on Michigan waters for 60 days before a Michigan registration and numbering is required.
- ◆ Larger recreational vessels, owned by U.S. citizens, may (at the option of the owner) be documented by the U.S. Coast Guard. Call the USCG's Documentation Center at 1-800-799-8362 for more information.
- ◆ Documented vessels are also required to be registered.

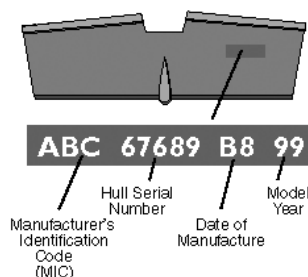
Schedule of Fees to Register Your Vessel	
Motorboats (all motors including electric motors)	
Less than 12 feet	\$ 14.00
12 feet to less than 16 feet	\$ 17.00
16 feet to less than 20 feet	\$ 42.00
20 feet to less than 28 feet	\$ 115.00
28 feet to less than 35 feet	\$ 168.00
35 feet to less than 42 feet	\$ 244.00
42 feet to less than 50 feet	\$ 280.00
50 feet and over	\$ 448.00
Pontoon vessels - any length	\$ 23.00
Motorized canoe - any length	\$ 14.00
Other Fees	
Non-powered vessels	\$ 9.00
15 day temporary permit	\$ 10.00

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Hull Identification Number

All vessels manufactured for sale must have a manufacturer's serial number or Hull Identification Number (HIN). It is unique to your vessel. HINs are typically engraved in the fiberglass or on a small metal plate attached to the transom.

Record your HIN number and put it in a place away from the vessel. It can be useful if warranty problems arise or if your vessel is lost or stolen.



Legal Requirements for Trailers

Michigan has specific requirements for vessel trailers. For further information, contact the Michigan Secretary of State at 517-322-1460 or call or visit one of their branch offices.

The law requires the following for trailers:

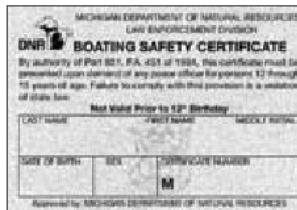
- ◆ Trailers must be licensed *and* registered.
- ◆ If the gross weight of the vessel and trailer exceeds 3,000 pounds, the trailer must be equipped with brakes.
- ◆ Trailers must have proper lighting, including turn signals, and tail and brake lights. All trailer lights must be maintained in an operable condition, same as when the trailer was manufactured.
- ◆ All towing vehicles must be connected to the trailer by a safety chain or cable of sufficient strength to maintain connection under all conditions.

It's the Law! 

Who May Operate a Boat

- ◆ Those less than 12 years of age:
 - May legally operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 horsepower (hp) without restrictions.
 - May legally operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 6 hp but no more than 35 hp only if they are directly supervised onboard by a person at least 16 years of age.
 - May not legally operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 35 hp under any conditions.
- ◆ Those 12 to 15 years of age:
 - May legally operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 hp without restrictions.
 - May legally operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 6 hp only if they:
 - Have passed a boating safety course approved by the Department of Natural Resources and have onboard their boating safety certificate *or...*
 - Are accompanied onboard by a person at least 16 years of age.
- ◆ Those 16 years of age or older:
 - May operate any boat on the waters of Michigan.

Note: see *Who May Operate a PWC* below.



Who May Operate a PWC

- ◆ No one less than 12 years old may legally operate a PWC.
- ◆ A person who is 12 or more and less than 14 years of age may operate a PWC *only if*:
 - He or she obtained a boating safety certificate prior to January 1, 1999 *or...*

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- *All* of the following conditions are satisfied:
 - The person is accompanied solely by his or her parent or legal guardian.
 - Both the person and the parent or legal guardian have obtained a boating safety certificate.
 - The PWC is equipped with a lanyard-type ignition safety switch and the parent or legal guardian has the lanyard attached to his or her person, clothing or PFD (life jacket).
 - The PWC is designed to carry at least two people.
- ◆ Those 14 years of age or older:
 - A person born after December 31, 1978, may operate a PWC only if he or she has obtained a boating safety certificate.
 - Those born December 31, 1978, or earlier may operate a PWC without restrictions.

Marine Events

- ◆ To hold a race, regatta or tournament you must notify the Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources at least 30 days prior to the event by calling (517) 373-1230.
- ◆ If the event is being held on federally controlled waters a permit from the U.S. Coast Guard is required.



Enforcement

The boating laws of Michigan are enforced by officers of the Law Enforcement Division of the Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources, County Sheriffs Department, U.S. Coast Guard, and any other authorized law enforcement officer. They have the right to stop and board vessels in order to check for compliance with federal and state laws. The USCG has enforcement authority on federally controlled waters.

It's the Law! **27**

Required Equipment for Your Vessel



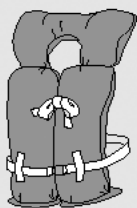
When preparing to go out on a vessel, the operator must check that the legally required equipment is onboard.

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

- ◆ All vessels must be equipped with a personal flotation device for each person onboard:
 - The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) requires that all vessels have at least one Type I, II, or III personal flotation device that is USCG-approved, wearable, and of the proper size for each person onboard. Sizing for PFDs is based on body weight and chest size.
 - Michigan's PFD law permits a vessel that is less than 16 feet long, or is a canoe or kayak, to choose to have either a wearable PFD (Type I, II, or III) or a throwable PFD (Type IV) for each person onboard.
- ◆ One Type IV USCG-approved PFD must be onboard vessels 16 feet or longer and readily accessible in addition to the above requirements.
- ◆ Michigan law requires all children under 6 years of age to *wear* a USCG-approved Type I or II PFD when riding on the open deck of any vessel.
- ◆ Each person riding on or towed behind a PWC must *wear* a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, or III personal flotation device. Inflatable PFDs may not be used.
- ◆ All PFDs must be in good and serviceable condition and must be readily accessible.

**TYPE I: Offshore Life Jacket**

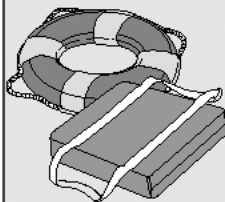
These vests are geared for rough or remote waters where rescue may take awhile. They are excellent for flotation and will turn most unconscious persons face up in the water.

**TYPE II: Near-Shore Vest**

These vests are good for calm waters and fast rescues. Type II vests may lack the capacity to turn unconscious wearers face up.

**TYPE III: Flotation Aid**

These vests or full-sleeved jackets are good for calm waters and fast rescues. They are not for rough waters since they will not turn a person face up.

**TYPE IV: Throwable Device**

These cushions or ring buoys are designed to be thrown to someone in trouble. They are not for long hours in rough waters, non-swimmers or the unconscious.

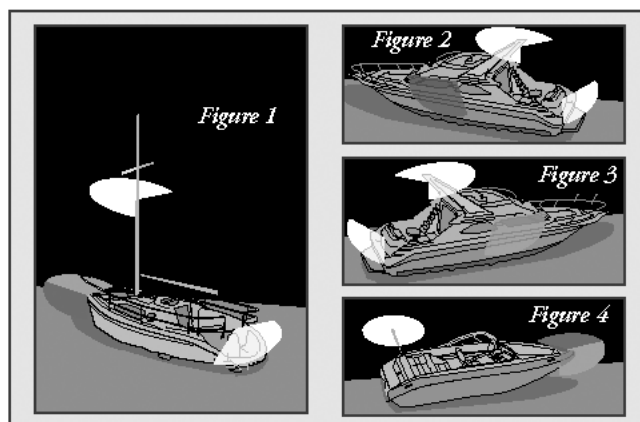
Navigation Lights

If underway between sunset and sunrise, vessels must be equipped with and exhibit navigation lights, and during other periods of reduced visibility (fog, rain, haze, etc.), on federally navigable waters. The required navigation lights differ depending on the type and size of your vessel.

Power-Driven Vessels When Underway

Remember, power-driven vessels include sailboats operating under power. The required lights are:

- ◆ Red and green sidelights visible from a distance of at least one mile
- ◆ **If 26 ft. long or longer** - A masthead light and a stern-light visible from a distance of at least two miles. The masthead light must be higher than the sidelights shown in *figures 1, 2, and 3*.
- ◆ **If less than 26 ft. long** - An all-round white light as shown in *figure 4* or both a masthead light and a stern-light shown in *figures 1, 2, and 3*. These lights must be visible from a distance of at least two miles. The all-round white light (or the masthead light) must be higher than the sidelights.

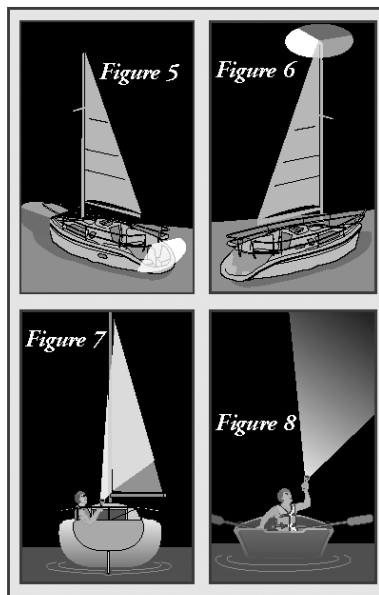


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Unpowered Vessels When Underway

Unpowered vessels are sailboats under sail, or canoes, kayaks, or rowboats.

- ◆ If 26 ft. long or longer, these vessels must exhibit lights as shown in *figures 5 and 6*:
 - Red and green sidelights visible from a distance of at least two miles
 - A sternlight visible from a distance of at least three miles.
- ◆ If less than 26 ft. long, these vessels should:
 - If practical, exhibit the lights shown in *figures 5 and 6*
 - If not practical, have on hand at least one lantern or flashlight shining a white light as shown in *figures 7 or 8*.



All Vessels When Not Underway

- ◆ All vessels are required to use an all-round white light between sunset and sunrise whenever they are anchored in the waters of or connected to the Great Lakes. It is advisable to always display a white light when anchored or adrift at night.

Fire Extinguishers

- ◆ All vessels, including PWCs, are required to have a Type B fire extinguisher(s) onboard if one or more of the following conditions exist:
 - Closed compartments under seats where portable fuel tanks may be stored
 - Closed storage compartments in which flammable or combustible materials may be stored
 - Closed living spaces
 - Permanently installed fuel tanks.
- ◆ Approved types of fire extinguishers are identified by the following marking on the label “Marine Type USCG Approved,” followed by the size and type symbols and the approval number.
- ◆ Extinguishers must be mounted in an accessible area. Check extinguishers annually to make sure they are charged and be sure you know how to operate them.



Use this chart to determine the type and quantity required:

Fire Extinguisher Requirements			
Classification type & size	Foam minimum gallons	Carbon Dioxide minimum pounds	Dry Chemical minimum pounds
B-I	1 1/4	4	2
B-II	2 1/2	15	10
Length Class	Without Fixed System		With Fixed System*
Less than 16 ft.	one B-I		None
16 ft. to less than 26 ft.	one B-I		None
26 ft. to less than 40 ft.	two B-I or one B-II		one B-I
40 ft. to less than 65 ft.	three B-I or one B-II and one B-I		two B-I or one B-II
<i>* refers to a permanently installed fire extinguisher system</i>			

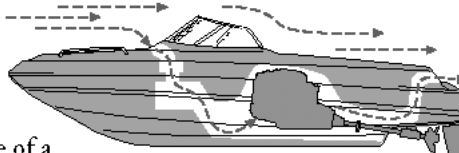
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Ventilation Systems

The importance of ventilation is crucial. The purpose of ventilation systems is to avoid explosions by removing flammable gas.

Properly installed ventilation

systems greatly reduce the chance of a life-threatening explosion.



- ◆ All gas-powered vessels, constructed in a way that would entrap fumes, must have at least two ventilation ducts fitted with cowls to remove the fumes.
- ◆ If your vessel is equipped with a power ventilation system, turn it on for at least four minutes after fueling, prior to starting your engine.

Backfire Flame Arrestors

- ◆ Because vessel engines may backfire, all powerboats, (except outboards) fueled with gasoline, must have a U.S. Coast Guard-approved (or comply with SAE J-1928 or UL 1111 standards) backfire flame arrestor on each carburetor.
- ◆ Periodically clean the flame arrestor and check for any damage.

Mufflers

A vessel's engine must have a factory-installed muffler or exhaust system for noise reduction or another effective muffling system. Excessive noise can prevent a vessel operator from hearing signals and voices.

- ◆ Michigan law states that a vessel's muffler or exhaust system must prevent noise in excess of:
 - 90 decibels at idle from three feet away *and...*
 - 75 decibels measured from onshore.

It's the Law! **B**

Sound Producing Devices

In periods of reduced visibility or whenever a vessel operator needs to signal his or her intentions or position, a sound producing device is essential.

If on State Waters	
<i>Vessel 16 feet up to 26 feet long and under engine power</i>	Whistle capable of producing a blast of 2 seconds or more and audible for at least 1/2 mile is required
<i>Vessel 26 feet long or longer and under engine power</i>	Whistle capable of producing a blast of 2 seconds or more and audible for at least 1 mile is required
If on Federally Controlled Waters	
<i>Vessel less than 39.4 feet long</i>	Whistle or horn capable of producing a blast of 4 seconds or more and audible for at least 1/2 mile is required
<i>Vessel 39.4 feet long or longer</i>	Whistle or horn and a bell capable of producing a blast of 4 seconds or more and audible for at least 1/2 mile are required

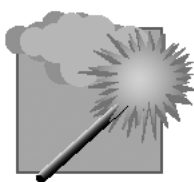
Visual Distress Signals (VDSs)

Visual Distress Signals (VDSs) allow vessel operators to signal for help in the event of an emergency. VDSs are classified as day signals (visible in bright sunlight), night signals (visible at night) or both day and night signals.

- ◆ All vessels used on **federally controlled waters**, such as the Great Lakes, must be equipped with U.S. Coast Guard-approved (day and night) visual distress signals.
- ◆ All vessels on federal waters are required to carry night signals when operating between sunset and sunrise. In addition, the following vessels must also carry day signals:
 - Recreational vessels 16 feet or longer
 - Non-motorized vessels and open sailboats 26 feet or longer.

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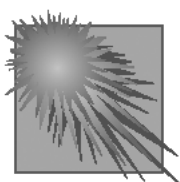
- ◆ If pyrotechnic VDSs are used, a minimum of three must be carried in the vessel. Pyrotechnic VDSs must be U.S. Coast Guard-approved, in serviceable condition, and readily accessible.



Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals

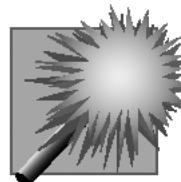
Orange Smoke

Day Signal



Red Meteor

Day and Night Signal



Red Flare

Day and Night Signal



Non-Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals

Electric Light

Night Signal



Orange Flag

Day Signal



Arm Signal

Although not a USCG-approved VDS, use this arm action to indicate you need help if you do not have other visual distress signals available.

Federally Controlled Waters

Vessels must observe federal requirements when operating on:

- Coastal waters
- The Great Lakes
- Territorial seas
- Waters that are two miles wide or wider and are directly connected to one of the above.

It's the Law! **35**

On the Water with Your Vessel



In addition to the laws mentioned previously, here are some other Michigan regulations that apply when vessel operators are on the water.

Unlawful and Dangerous Operation

Michigan law designates these dangerous operating practices as illegal:

- ◆ **Reckless Operation** of a vessel or reckless manipulation of water skis, a surfboard, or similar device is defined as that which disregards the safety or rights of others or endangers the person or property of others. Some examples are:
 - ◆ Weaving your vessel through congested waterway traffic or swerving at the last possible moment in order to avoid collision
 - ◆ Jumping the wake of another vessel unnecessarily close to the other vessel or when visibility around the other vessel is restricted
 - ◆ Chasing, harassing or disturbing wildlife with your vessel
 - ◆ Causing damage from the wake of your vessel.
- ◆ **Failure to Regulate Speed** is operating a vessel at speeds that may cause danger to life or property of any other person or speeds that will not permit you to bring your vessel to a safe stop. It is illegal to operate a vessel:
 - ◆ In excess of 55 mph except if at least one mile offshore of the Great Lakes or Lake St. Clair.
 - ◆ At greater than slow-no wake speed if any person is in the bow of a vessel without proper seating.
 - ◆ Faster than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions (weather, vessel traffic, etc.).

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- ◆ **Improper Distance** is operating at greater than slow-no wake speed (except in channels which are not posted) and such that the vessel or persons being towed are within 100 feet of:
 - A shoreline (if operating in water less than 3 feet deep)
 - Any moored or anchored vessel
 - A dock or raft
 - Any marked swimming area or person(s) in the water.

“Slow-No Wake” - The slowest speed at which it is still possible to maintain steering and does not create a wake

In addition, if operating at greater than slow-no wake speed, PWCs must:

- Stay at least 200 feet from any Great Lakes’ shoreline
- Not cross within 150 feet behind another vessel other than another PWC.
- ◆ **Improper Direction** is defined as the failure to operate in a counter-clockwise direction except in areas marked by well-defined channels or rivers.
- ◆ **Boating in Restricted Areas** is defined as operating within a restricted area clearly marked by buoys, beacons, diver down flags, etc.
- ◆ **Riding on Bow** is illegal if the vessel is not equipped with bow seating and the vessel is operating at greater than slow-no wake speed. Persons are also not allowed to ride on the gunwale. While underway, persons on a vessel cannot sit, stand, or walk on any portion of a vessel not designed for that purpose.

It's the Law! **37**

Alcohol and Drugs

Michigan law prohibits anyone from boating while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It is also unlawful for the owner of a vessel to allow anyone else to operate their vessel if that person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- ◆ The following conditions determine if you are boating under the influence:
 - If your blood alcohol concentration is 0.10% or greater by weight of alcohol as determined by a breath, blood, or urine test.
 - If your blood alcohol concentration is greater than 0.07% but less than 0.10% by weight of alcohol as determined by a breath, blood, or urine test a law enforcement officer can consider that fact along with other evidence in determining if you are under the influence.
- ◆ Michigan law establishes the following penalties:
 - People arrested for boating under the influence are guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon a third conviction within 10 years, a person will be guilty of a felony.
 - If a person boating under the influence causes great bodily injury or death of another person, they will also be guilty of a felony.
 - By operating a vessel on Michigan waters, you have consented to be tested for alcohol or drugs if arrested by a law enforcement official.

Just remember this simple rule:

Don't drink and boat!



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Obstructing Navigation

It is illegal to:

- ◆ Anchor a vessel in the traveled portion of a river or channel that will prevent or interfere with any other vessel passing through the same area.
- ◆ Moor or attach a vessel to a buoy, beacon, light, or any other navigational aid placed on public waters by proper authorities. Also, it is illegal to move, displace, tamper with, damage, or destroy any navigational aid.
- ◆ Obstruct a pier, wharf, boat ramp, or access to any facility.

Accidents and Casualties

- ◆ The operator of a vessel, or each person onboard, must report an occurrence without delay, by the quickest means available, to the nearest conservation officer, sheriff of the county, or nearest state police post when:
 - A person dies *or*...
 - A person disappears from a vessel.
- ◆ The operator or the owner of a vessel must file an accident report form supplied by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources within 48 hours if:
 - A person dies within 24 hours of the occurrence.
 - A person loses consciousness or receives medical treatment or is disabled for more than 24 hours.
 Or within 5 days if:
 - Damage to the vessel and other property damage totals more than \$2,000.00.
 - A person disappears from the vessel under circumstances that indicate death or injury.
- ◆ You must stop and render assistance is necessary to any person involved in a boating accident unless the action would endanger your own vessel or passengers.
- ◆ You must give your name, address, and Certificate of Number information in writing to any injured person and to the owner of any damaged property if you are involved in a boating accident.

It's the Law! 39

Diver Down Flags

- ◆ Scuba divers or snorkelers must display a “diver down” flag to mark their diving area. Divers must stay within 100 feet of the vertical position of their diver down flag.
- ◆ Vessels must remain at least 200 feet away from the flag.



Divers Flag

A rectangular red flag, at least 14 inches by 16 inches, with a 3 1/2" white diagonal stripe.



Alfa Flag

A blue and white International Code Flag A (or Alfa flag) is required on federal waters.

Discharge of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances

- ◆ It is illegal to discharge oil or hazardous substances.
- ◆ You are not allowed to dump oil into the bilge of the vessel without means for proper disposal.
- ◆ You must discharge oil waste to a reception facility. On recreational vessels, a bucket or bailer is adequate.
- ◆ If your vessel is 26 feet or longer you must display a 5 by 8 inch placard near the bilge pump switch stating the Federal Water Pollution Control Act's law.

If your vessel discharges oil or hazardous substances in the water:

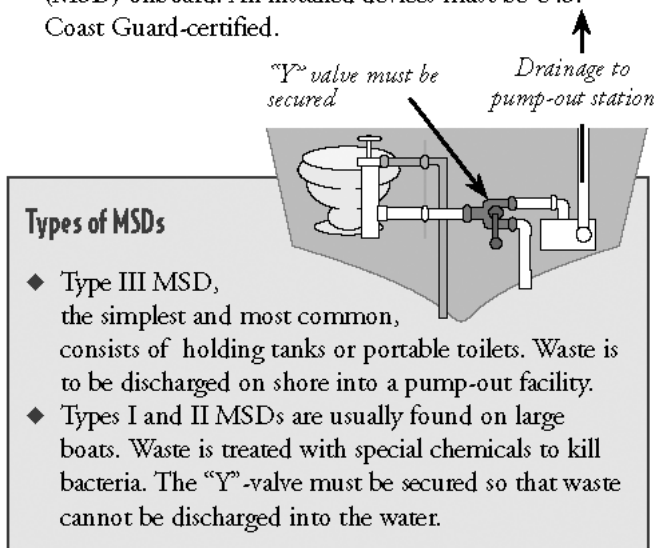
- ◆ Immediately call the U.S. Coast Guard at 1-800-424-8802.
- ◆ You should also report the discharge to the Michigan Pollution Emergency Alerting System (PEAS) by calling 1-800-292-4706.



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Discharge of Waste

- ◆ Houseboats must have a waste-water holding system to prevent the discharge of waste into the water. Michigan law prohibits discharge of any sewage, treated or untreated, into the state's freshwaters.
- ◆ If you have a recreational vessel with installed toilet facilities, it must have an operable marine sanitation device (MSD) onboard. All installed devices must be U.S. Coast Guard-certified.



Discharge of Trash

It is illegal to dump garbage and plastics into federally controlled and state waters.

- ◆ You must store trash in a container onboard, and place it in a proper receptacle after returning to shore.
- ◆ You must display a 4 by 9 inch placard (sign) on any vessel 26 feet or longer. It must notify passengers and crew about pollution restrictions.

It's the Law! **41**

Especially for PWCs



PWC operators must adhere to additional legal requirements that apply specifically to the operation of personal watercraft on Michigan waters.

Requirements Specific to PWCs

- ◆ Each person riding on or towed behind a PWC must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, or III PFD. Inflatable PFDs may not be used.
- ◆ You may not allow a child under 7 years of age to ride on or be towed behind a PWC, unless with a parent or guardian, or designee of the parent or guardian.
- ◆ The lanyard of a PWC's ignition safety switch must be attached to the person, clothing, or PFD of the operator.
- ◆ It is illegal to operate a PWC between one hour before sunset and 8:00 AM.
- ◆ PWCs must be operated in a reasonable and prudent manner at all times. It is illegal to:
 - Jump the wake of another vessel unnecessarily close to the other vessel
 - Weave your PWC through congested traffic
 - Swerve at the last possible moment to avoid collision.
- ◆ A PWC must be operated at slow-no wake speed if crossing within 150 feet behind another vessel, unless the other vessel is also a PWC.
- ◆ You may not operate a PWC within 200 feet of a Great Lakes shoreline unless traveling at slow-no wake speed perpendicular to the shoreline.
- ◆ It is illegal to harass wildlife or disturb aquatic vegetation with your PWC.

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- ◆ You may not operate a PWC in waters less than 2 feet deep unless you are operating at slow-no wake speed, or are docking or launching your PWC.

Sharing Your PWC ... Safely!

Sharing the fun of your PWC with your friends and family is all part of the boating experience. However, you should always make sure that anyone operating your PWC understands their responsibilities as a driver of a PWC. Let them know that they are operating a vessel and have the same responsibilities as any other vessel operator. Before allowing anyone to operate your PWC:

- ◆ Make sure they meet the minimum age and education requirements for PWC operation.
- ◆ Make sure they know basic boating safety information and “rules of the road.”
- ◆ Let beginners take their first rides in an area where there are few vessels and swimmers. While still on shore, show them the proper procedures for deep water starting and reboarding.
- ◆ Explain the basic operating features of the PWC. Be sure to give instruction on how to steer and control the PWC. Remind the operator that power is required for steering control!
- ◆ Make sure the operator understands how to use the lanyard with the ignition safety switch.
- ◆ Explain the importance of obeying slow-no wake restrictions.
- ◆ Emphasize the need for staying alert. Beginning riders may concentrate on riding and not on paying attention to the surrounding traffic in the area.



It's the Law! 43

Especially for Skiers and Those Towing Them



Vessel operators towing a person(s) on water skis or a similar device have additional laws they must follow.

Towing Skiers

- ◆ Every vessel towing a person(s) on water skis, a surfboard, or a similar device must have a person, in addition to the vessel operator, observing the towed person(s) at all times.
- ◆ It is illegal to tow skiers, surfboards, or any device of this type between:
 - One hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise if towed behind a boat
 - One hour before sunset and 8:00 AM if towed behind a PWC.
- ◆ Persons being towed must stay at least 100 feet away from:
 - Any moored or anchored vessel
 - A dock or raft
 - Any marked swimming area or person(s) in the water.
- ◆ Those being towed behind a PWC must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, or III PFD. Inflatable PFDs may not be used.

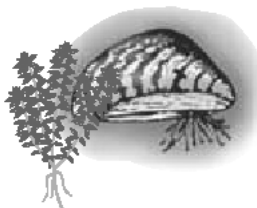


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Protecting the Environment

Stop the Spread of Nuisance Species!

Aquatic nuisance species, like zebra mussels and eurasian watermilfoil, most often spread between waterways by hitching a ride on vessels and trailers. When moved into new waters, these species rapidly multiply, damaging the water resource.



Prevent spreading nuisance species:

- Inspect your vessel and trailer, removing any nuisance species (zebra mussels and eurasian watermilfoil) you see before leaving the waterway.
- Drain your motor, live well, and bilge on land before leaving the waterway.
- Empty your bait bucket on land. Never release live bait into a waterway or release aquatic animals from one waterway into another.
- Rinse your vessel, trailer and equipment.
- Air dry your vessel and equipment for as long as possible.
- Kill attached zebra mussels by pulling vessels out of the water to dry for a minimum of 10-14 days.
- Flush the engine's cooling system with hot water.
- Apply antifouling materials such as paint and films to vessel hulls, trim tabs, water ports, transducers and swimming platforms to discourage zebra mussel attachment.

Remember when you caught your first fish?

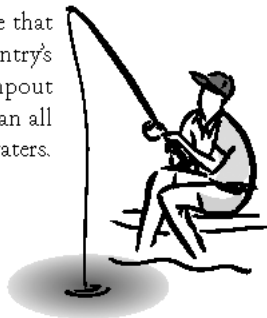
Our children will not experience that same thrill unless we keep this country's waterways pollution free. Using pumpout and dump stations is something we can all do to protect our waters.



**Keep our water
clean—use pumpouts**

For information on pumpout
and dump station locations, call

1-800-ASK-FISH



Waste Handling Facilities

Michigan has approximately 280 marina-provided pumpout stations which are widely available to recreational boaters. The 280 pumpouts serve 32,000 boats with Marine Sanitation Devices (MSDs) kept at Great Lakes coastal locations in Michigan,

including 9,000 boats not kept at marinas. Keeping our environment clean is everybody's job. Please make it yours.

Clean Boating Tips for Petroleum Control

Petroleum in or on the water is harmful and, in some cases, fatal to aquatic life. Floating petroleum reduces light penetration and the exchange of oxygen at the water's surface, and contaminates the microlayer. The microlayer is the uppermost portion of the water column—home to thousands of species of plants, animals, and microbes that attract seabirds from above and fish from below. Pollution in the microlayer can poison much of the aquatic food web.

The Law

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act (also called the Clean Water Act) prohibits the discharge of oil or oily waste into or upon the navigable waters of the United States or the waters of the contiguous zone if such discharge causes a film or sheen upon, or discoloration of, the surface of the water, or causes a sludge or emulsion beneath the surface of the water. Violators are subject to a penalty of \$5,000 from the U.S. Coast Guard. State law also prohibits the discharge of oil. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality may impose additional fines.

Fueling Practices

Gas or diesel may be spilled while fueling: as backslash out the fuel intake or as overflow out the vent fitting. Spills harm aquatic life. Follow these tips to avoid problems:



- Fill tanks to no more than 90% capacity—gas that is drawn from cool storage tanks will expand as it warms up.
- To determine when the tank is 90% full, listen to the filler pipe, use a sounding stick, and be aware of your tank's volume.
- Rather than filling your tank upon your return to port, wait and fill it just before leaving on your next trip. This practice will reduce spills due to thermal expansion because the fuel will be used before it warms-up.
- Fill portable tanks ashore where spills are less likely to occur and easier to cleanup.
- Use oil absorbent pads to catch all drips.
- Slow down at the beginning and end of fueling.

Pollution Emergencies

Call the Pollution Emergency Alerting System (PEAS)
1-800-292-4706.

DNR Law Enforcement District Offices

Law Enforcement Division Office
P.O. Box 30031, Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-1230

District 3 Office
1420 U.S. 2 West
Crystal Falls, Michigan 49920
(906) 875-6622

District 10 Office
38980 Seven Mile Road
Livonia, Michigan 48152
(734) 953-0241

District 4 Office
5100 State Hwy. M-123
Newberry, Michigan 49868
(906) 293-5131

District 11 Office
8562 East Stoll Road
East Lansing, Michigan 48823
(517) 641-4903

District 5 Office
1732 West M-32
Gaylord, Michigan 49735
(989) 732-3541

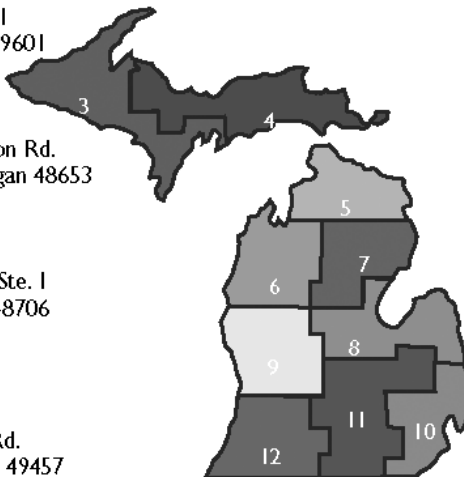
District 12 Office
621 North 10th Street
Plainwell, Michigan 49080
(269) 685-6851

District 6 Office
8015 Mackinaw Trail
Cadillac, Michigan 49601
(231) 775-9727


District 7 Office
8717 N. Roscommon Rd.
Roscommon, Michigan 48653
(989) 275-5151

District 8 Office
503 N. Euclid Ave., Ste. 1
Bay City, Michigan 48706
(989) 684-9141

District 9 Office
District 9 Office
7550 E. Messinger Rd.
Twin Lake, Michigan 49457
(231) 788-1134



Required Equipment Checklist

	PWC	Boat Less Than 16 Ft.	Boat 16 Ft. to Less Than 26 Ft.
Boater Safety Certification Card	✓ ¹	✓ ¹	✓ ¹
Certificate of Number Onboard	✓	✓	✓
Validation Decal Displayed	✓	✓	✓
PFDs: Type I, II, or III	✓ ²	✓ ³	✓ ³
PFD: Type IV			✓
Type B-I Fire Extinguisher	✓	✓	✓
Ignition Safety Switch	✓		
Flame Arrestor	✓	✓ ⁴	✓ ⁴
Ventilation System	✓	✓	✓
Muffler	✓	✓	✓
Horn, Whistle, or Bell	✓ ⁵	✓ ⁵	✓
Daytime Visual Distress System			✓ ⁵
Night Time Visual Distress System	N/A	✓ ⁵	✓ ⁵
Navigation Lights	N/A	✓ ⁶	✓ ⁶

1. Applicable if operator is a minor. See pages 26-27 for details.
2. Those on PWCs must wear a PFD at all times. Inflatable PFDs may not be used.
3. Those under the age of 6 years must wear a PFD when riding on the open deck of any vessel.
4. Required on inboard and stern drives only.
5. Required only on the Great Lakes and waters connected to the Great Lakes.
6. Unpowered vessels (sailboats under sail, rowboats, etc.) are only required to have on hand a flashlight or a lantern.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources



- ▲ STAY CURRENT ON BOATING LAWS
- ▲ GET WEEKLY FISHING REPORTS
- ▲ PURCHASE FISHING AND HUNTING LICENSES ONLINE
- ▲ GET ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT:
 - BOAT REGISTRATION
 - FISHING AND HUNTING REGULATIONS
- ▲ FIND OUT ABOUT STATE PARKS:
 - LOCATIONS AND FEES
 - ACTIVITIES: CAMPING, FISHING, HIKING, BOATING
- ▲ MAKE CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS ONLINE



Visit our website:
www.michigan.gov/dnr

Everything you want to know
about what's going on outdoors in
Michigan is just a click away.